

“(3) OUTREACH.—The Office shall work with the district offices and the outreach business assistance centers of the Administration, including Small Business Development Centers, Women’s Business Centers, and SCORE, to offer the set of services established under paragraph (1) to small businesses in their local communities.”.

TITLE IV—EXPORT ASSISTANCE

SEC. 401. INCREASE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PARTICIPATION AT EXPORT ASSISTANCE CENTERS.

Section 22 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 649), as amended by this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(n) TRADE FINANCE POSITIONS.—

“(1) ADDITIONAL TRADE FINANCE SPECIALISTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Office, over the 1-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this subsection, shall increase the number of trade finance specialists at Export Assistance Centers by at least 6 and thereafter shall maintain the number of such trade finance specialists at or above that number. Candidates for the positions are required to have sufficient qualifications and experiences.

“(B) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out subparagraph (A) such sums as may be necessary.

“(2) FILLING VACANT POSITIONS.—The Office, over the 3-month period beginning on the date of the enactment of this subsection, shall fill all trade finance positions that have been vacant since 2003. Candidates for the positions are required to have sufficient qualifications and experiences.

“(3) FILLING GAPS IN HIGH-EXPORT-VOLUME AREAS.—The director of the Office shall—

“(A) not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this subsection, carry out a national study to compare the rate of exports from each State and major metropolitan region to the availability of Administration staff participating in Export Assistance Centers in such State or region;

“(B) not later than 2 years after such date of enactment, design a formula to eliminate gaps between supply of, and demand for, such staff in areas with high export volumes; and

“(C) request the additional staff that are required to eliminate such gaps and place them in those areas.”.

SEC. 402. INCREASE ACCESS TO CAPITAL FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED EXPORTERS.

Section 7(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(D) by amending the heading to read as follows: “PARTICIPATION UNDER EXPORT WORKING CAPITAL AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE PROGRAMS”; and

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (A) by striking “subparagraph (B)” and inserting “subparagraphs (B) and (C)”;:

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and (C) as (C) and (D), respectively;

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

“(B) if the total amount outstanding and committed (by participation or otherwise) solely for the purposes provided in paragraphs (14)(A) and (16) to the borrower from the business loan and investment fund established by this Act would exceed \$2,250,000 (or if the gross loan amount would exceed \$3,000,000), except as provided in subparagraph (C);”; and

(D) in subparagraph (C) (as so redesignated) by striking “\$1,750,000, of which not more than \$1,250,000” and inserting “\$2,250,000, of which not more than \$1,600,000”.

SEC. 403. CLERICAL AMENDMENT.

Section 22(c)(5) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 649) is amended by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon.

TITLE V—AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

SEC. 501. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

International trade is a key part of our economic future, and competition in the global marketplace will only increase in the years to come. Consequently, our country is facing many decisions concerning how we will engage in transnational commerce. To utilize resources effectively and secure our industry’s leadership, it is critical that the Nation’s trade strategy incorporates a key source of innovation in world markets, small businesses.

I want to thank Representative HALL for introducing this legislation. He has been a strong supporter of trade policies that will benefit all Americans.

Small businesses that generate and develop new products have shown that they can lead the way in building entire industries. They represent virtually all of the country’s exporting firms, improving our trade balance and introducing U.S. products to consumers across the world. With all of their success, these firms still face barriers to maintaining domestic and international markets. As a result, although the entrepreneurs are nearly 100 percent of export firms, they generate less than one-third of revenues from these activities.

Given their contributions, it is critical that entrepreneurs are considered in the Nation’s trade strategy and that obstacles to their competitiveness are removed. By enhancing the Small Business Administration’s focus to reflect the international-oriented demands of small businesses, H.R. 2992 will ensure that entrepreneurs are able to effectively incorporate trade into their business strategy.

The SBA Trade Programs Act of 2007 will provide small firms with a comprehensive set of tools to thrive in a marketplace without borders. It will assist them to overcome trade barriers by enhancing their access to export financing, counseling and technical assistance programs. The SBA’s mandate is also expanded to ensure entre-

preneurs participate on a level playing field as they face global competition.

To make certain that small businesses have access to newly opened world markets, H.R. 2992 requires the agencies to incorporate entrepreneurs’ interests into trade policies and plans. The bill increases trade finance resources and the size of international trade loans which will facilitate small exporters’ overseas transactions. These improvements will help to ensure that the Nation’s trade promotion strategy supports, and benefits from, U.S. small businesses.

Small firms play a crucial role in promoting the global competitiveness of our country’s industries. Including them in the development of the U.S. trade policy will support the growth of the Nation’s economy, as well as to reduce the trade deficit. Effective trade strategies, enforcement assistance, and export promotion resources will ensure small businesses contribute to maintaining the Nation’s global leadership. Doing so will guarantee that benefits of free trade are more widely distributed to not only businesses but also more of our Nation’s communities.

I strongly urge support of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2992, the SBA Trade Programs Act of 2007. The committee worked in a cooperative and bipartisan basis to bring these changes in the SBA’s operation of its programs to enhance small business participation in the global economy. H.R. 2992 represents the Small Business Committee’s continued commitment to promotion of international trade by America’s small businesses.

The Small Business Administration has a number of general entrepreneurial assistance programs that provide technical advice to small business owners. However, international trade is an area that is fraught with regulatory issues requiring specialized knowledge that may not be available from the SBA’s entrepreneurial partners.

It is not surprising to find that the SBA created other programs to meet the needs of small business exporters that rely on personnel with specialized knowledge about the international trade regulatory regime. These programs, as well as the SBA efforts to coordinate with other agencies such as the Department of Commerce, have resulted in remarkable gains in exports.

There are about a quarter of a million small businesses that export. Revenue increased from \$102.8 billion to \$203 billion in 2004. There’s no doubt that small businesses are playing a vital role in reducing America’s trade deficit. Continuation of this success and even greater impetus on small business exporting will benefit the American economy.

H.R. 2992 requires the Small Business Administration to expand its trade